NOTES FROM LONDON.

PERSONAL, LITERARY, ARTISTIC.

[FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]
LONDON, April 12.

Admiral Nicholson was here in London for a few days, and sailed last week for New-York in the steamship Spain. He turned over his command to Admiral Baldwin a month ago. At the same time he completed his forty-fifth year of continuous service in the United States Navy, and thereupon retires in accordance with the law for such cases made and founded. He leaves, I suppose, no more capable officer behind him; few or none who have served more brilliantly and honorably or had a more varied career. It happens, if I may say so much of myself, that I was with Admiral Nicholson for a short time on his first command—the gunboat Isaac Smith—in which I sailed up Warsaw Sound with him, now twenty-one years ago. I went down to Southampton the other day, and on board the Lancaster, then flying his flag, and so was with him for an hour or two on his last as well as on his first ship. In the interval I had never seen him, but I knew his history, as I hope all good Americans know it, for it is bound up with the honor of the country.

From Admiral Nicholson and from some of his officers (one of them, Captain Gherardi, I had last known at school) I heard accounts of what happened last July at Alexandria when, as the story ran in England, the Lancaster cheered the British fleet on to the bombardment, and when, after the fight was over, the Admiral landed some of his blue-jackets and marines to help restore order in the burning city. I am not going over the story now, but there was a single point which will, I think, make an impression on others as it did on me. What was done by our ships and men during those eventful days made its mark on Anglo-American history. Once more the English felt and said that blood is thicker than water. The two nations came closer to each other. The cheers from the Lancaster, the little armed American force that stood by the not much bigger British force then facing an army ten times its strength, once again reminded the English, and reminded us, that we are after all one nation and not two. Well, my point is this: I don't think that what may be called the sentimental side of these transactions so much as occurred to Admiral Nicholson at the time. From his own story and from those of his officers, it was quite clear that he understood himself to be in the harbor of Alexandria to carry out his instructions as an officer of the American Government, and did it. If the blue-jackets cheered, it was because they felt like it. If the band played, it is usual for bands of ships of war to play as they pass each other. If the Admiral landed a force, the object of landing it was, primarily, to re-establish the American Consulate. On the other hand, the cheering and band-playing, it is safe to say, would not have occurred if they had been displeasing to Admirable Nicholson. The officer who commanded the American marines and sailors on shore, whatever his formal instructions may have been, perfectly understood that he was to lend the British a hand so far as he could, and the services actually performed of that gallant little company were of the most practical and valuable character. And so it turns out that an American Admiral, bent on doing his strict duty to his own country, conferred an obligation on the country of his ancestors, and drew closer the ties that bind the people of England and the people of America together to-day.

Perhaps it is not less characteristic of Admiral Nicholson that he avoids even the natural occasion for anything like English recognition of his services. He passes through London on his way home, but his coming has been so quiet that the papers did not find it out, nor was it known to the English naval authorities or to his English friends. While the Lancaster was lying in Southampton water, the Admiral declined all invitations. When he arrived in London he seems to have called on nobody but his own countrymen. He took up his quarters in a private hotel, in a quarter remote from clubs and the official world. Perhaps the state of his health had something to do with this, for he was suffering, I am sorry to say, from gout. But the suggestion that anybody in England might care to see him was obviously a surprise to him. He dined at the American Legation, but the party was wholly American. In short, a man whom the London world would have been delighted to lionize has slipped through their fingers and gone quietly home. There is a touch of the dignity of other days about this which makes it none the less interesting.

The Earl of Dalhousie, a young nobleman of whom you heard something as Lord Ramsay, and will certainly hear more by his present title, underwent last Friday a severe surgical operation—severe enought to keep him two hours etherized. He is now regaining strength, but will be confined to his bed for some weeks. His successful contest for Liverpool in 1880 gave him a position in the House of Commons which the death of his father, a few months later, and his succession to the peerage, deprived him of prematurely. But he has become known in the House of Lords as one of the few really Liberal Peers whom that body contains; as a man with a power of thinking for himself about politics, and of looking beyond the precincts of the Chamber or the interests of his order. In Scotland, too, where they know a man of abilities when they see him, Lord Dalhousie has made a name for himself, and is looked upon as sure of a distinguished future. He can speak. I heard him deliver an address last winter in Edinburgh full of good sense, individuality, clear views, with a way of putting things which his audience found attractive and persuasive. This surgical business, though of a grim nature, is now, I understand, well over and fine and lasting health expected to be the result of it; a result sincerely hoped for by all sorts and conditions of men.

Mrs. Frances Butler Leigh's "Ten Years on a Georgia Plantation" has been reviewed by the English press in various tones. *The Pall Mall Gazette* to-day describes it as melancholy from every possible point of view, but instead of drawing from it Mrs. Leigh's intended moral, that the negro is hopeless, infers that it is the ex-slave—owning aristocracy of the South which is hopeless. The members of this aristocracy, in other words, have learned nothing and forgotten nothing since the war. Mrs. Butler evidently believed, after the fighting was over, that things would come round to the old fashion, with only a few thousand freedmen the more. Says her English critic in a striking sentence:

> An immense wave of social revolution had passed over the land; a whole artificial system had been dissolved by a stroke of Lincoln's pen, followed by a sweep of Sherman's sword; the negro of Georgia had emerged at one step from more than mediæval serfdom to modern equal citizenship; and the Butler family went placidly back to St. Simon's, expecting to get in the ordinary cotton crop as if nothing unusual had occurred meanwhile.

This review, as a whole, shows an unusually accurate knowledge of the state of things in the South under the reign of emancipation; knowledge of negro character included.

Mr. A. H. Haig's remarkable etching of the very remarkable Mont St. Michel has lately been published by Mr. Robert Dunthorne, of Vigo-st. The size of the plate, exclusive of margin, is 34⅜ by 24⅞ inches, which is also remarkable. But Mr. Haig's work has much more than mere bigness to recommend it to the lover of etching and of architecture. A view of the world-famous rock off the coast of Normandy is here given from base to summit; the sea, the sands, the ramparts, the houses clinging to the steep slope, and the noble abbey crowning the whole. Mr. Haig's power of dealing with architectural work has been shown before by his views of Chartres Cathedral. Here he has tried landscape and architecture together on a scale which must make his work a disastrous failure if it be not a success. There can be no question of his success in producing a most interesting picture; open to criticism on some technical points as an example of etching, but penetrated throughout with right and adequate feeling for this magnificent monument of the genius of other days. To use a word only too often misused of late, this print is of an exceedingly decorative kind. It is something far better than that; a faithful record of Mont St. Michel, whose towers and turrets and pinnacles stand darkly out against a cloud-swept sky, and rise from the ocean with something of the same towering solidity which impresses the spectator of the actual scene. On the whole, a sound and admirable piece of work. Five hundred impressions will be taken off upon Whatman paper, each impression signed by Mr. Haig, the plate then to be destroyed. This is in gratifying contrast to the now common practice of "steeling" plates, and pouring out upon the public prints without number, of which it may be feared copies are not seldom disposed of to the unwary as "artists' proofs." The purchaser of Mr. Haig's Mont St. Michel has an assurance that the number of copies is limited and can never be increased. A printed notice of Mont St. Michel is also issued by Mr. Dunthorne, the text by Mr. Haig, with a sketch-etching; a rather sumptuous piece of Chiswick Presstypography in the Old English or black letter manner.

I am asked to say that there will be an Exhibition of Sanitary Domestic Appliances, Hygienic Dress and Decorations at Humphreys's Hall, Albert Gate, London, beginning June 2 and continuing a fortnight. The exhibition is held under the management of the National Health Society; the manager is Mr. E. J. Powell, to whom application should be addressed at the hall above named, or at No. 44 Berners-st. "We shall be exceedingly glad," writes Mr. Powell, "to show American inventions in either or all of the classes of exhibits." The chairman of the committee is Mr. Ernest Hart, a well-known medical and sanitary writer. The Princess Christian and the Duchess of Westminster are patronesses, and the committee includes Lord Derby, the Dowager Lady Stanley of Alderley, Mr. Edwin Chadwick, Mr. Spencer Wells, president of the College of Surgeons, Professor Norman Lockyer, and many others of high position and particular authority in such matters.

G. W. S.

THE DYNAMITE LAW.

WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT WAS PASSED.

[FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]
LONDON, April 10.

Probably no such sitting of both Houses of Parliament has been known as that of yesterday, in which the Explosives bill was passed. The circumstances under which they met are without precedent. The spirit in which they did their work, if not without precedent, was, with an exception to be presently mentioned, suited to the gravity of the occasion. Certainly it is characteristic of English temper that the known urgency of the danger to be met did not induce either House to depart from its usual forms. In the House of Commons at the opening petitions were presented and questions asked, each in rather unusual numbers; then, pursuant to notice, the orders of the day were postponed. The Home Secretary rose at once to state the provisions of his new measure. At the end of his speech he moved for leave to bring in the bill. The Home Secretary under the late Government, Sir Richard Cross, spoke briefly, with just so much criticism as an Opposition leader feels bound to make. The House then agreed to the motion for bringing in the bill, which was at once read a first time and immediately after a second time, upon which a motion was made and carried that the Speaker leave the chair, and the House went into committee. Each clause was separately agreed to in committee, two or three of them eliciting brief comment but no real opposition. The whole bill, without amendment of any kind, was then ordered to be reported to the House, the Speaker resumed the chair, and the bill was at once read a third time and passed. The time occupied in these proceedings was under an hour and a half. There is no modern precedent for such celerity, except in the case of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus act in 1866, nor was that act passed so quickly as this. Sir William Harcourt went to the other chamber where it had not been intended to take the Explosives bill till to-day, and privately urged the importance of its immediate passage. The Lords were then engaged in a debate on India, and the debate ran its course. Upon its conclusion, Lord Kimberley moved the suspension of the standing orders of the House. Three or four five-minute speeches were made on that motion; it was agreed to, the bill was read a first and second time, committee was dispensed with, the third reading followed, and the bill was passed and ready to receive the royal assent, which will be given at noon to-day.

What is the bill? Undoubtedly one of the most stringent measures ever framed to prevent a particular crime. It is a measure of considerable length, fills a column of print, and bears marks of rapid composition, if grammatical errors in a Parliamentary act can be deemed marks of haste, in which case it must be inferred that a great many acts are prepared in haste. Sir William Harcourt's speech in introducing the bill may be commended to the student of forensic or legislative oratory as a remarkable example of terse, clear, impressive, and even decisive statement. It contains not a word of declamation, not a sentence that could be construed as an appeal to passion; is throughout dignified and penetrated with a spirit of just sternness. Not many men are now in a mood for trifling; least of all the men on whom, more than on any other, rests the responsibility of protecting society against Irish assassins and Irish agents of wholesale destruction.

There is an act in existence known as the Explosives Act of 1875, and it is under this act that the men already arrested—Whitehead, Gallagher and others—have been charged, and under this alone that they can be punished. It was not framed or passed with any view to such a state of things as now exists. Its main object was to provide against the careless handling and accumulation of dangerous explosives. It did not anticipate—nobody then anticipated—the use of dynamite on a great scale for great crimes. The definitions of the act of 1875 are so various that anybody under it may, with a little easy caution, commit crime with impunity. Its penalties are ludicrously inadequate. The possession of explosives with intent to commit a felony is a misdemeanor, punishable by two years' imprisonment, and that is all Whitehead and his accomplices can be awarded, unless they can be convicted of conspiracy also. For all future purposes that act may be put aside, and this new one becomes law in its stead.

The new law creates three grades of offences. First, any person who maliciously causes an explosion likely to endanger life or cause serious injury to property is declared guilty of felony, and punishable by penal servitude for life, whether life be lost or property injured or not. Secondly, any person doing any act or being in possession of any explosive with intent to cause an explosion, whether the explosion occur or not, may be punished by penal servitude for twenty years. Third, any person found in possession of an explosive under circumstances of reasonable suspicion is liable to penal servitude for fourteen years.

These are the three classes of offences and of punishments. But the act does not stop there. It goes on to provide means not only of punishing, but of detecting and preventing, crimes of this hideous character. It makes every man, I should premise, who supplies or solicits money for such purposes, or who counsels, aids or abets in the commission of the crime, guilty of felony and liable to exactly the same punishment as the principal. The machinery for detecting criminals is borrowed in part from the Crimes Act for Ireland—the same under which the Phœnix Park murders have been traced. It gives power to order an inquiry—what the Parnellites call an inquisition—compelling witnesses to attend and testify, examining them in private, taking depositions, arresting those about to abscond. And there are very wide and comprehensive sections with reference to search, to what shall be deemed explosives, and to the power of masters of vessels to break open suspicious packages.

Some of Sir William Harcourt's observations are of hardly less interest than the bill itself. The tribute to the police is echoed by everybody. The police in this business have shown an intelligence, zeal and courage for which they can hardly be too much praised. They have redeemed its detective department from reproach only too well deserved on some previous occasions. They were aptly described as the first line of defence against the new danger; against the organized band of men, some of them in the higher walks of life, banded together like the assassins of the East, whose avowed object is to collect money for general murder and for the burning down of civilized towns. Possibly some of these interesting persons in the higher walks of life in America will be surprised to hear that the British Government proposes to take cognizance of their performances even in America, if they happen to be British subjects. "Over aliens abroad," observed the Home Secretary, "we have no power. But over a British subject we have authority and jurisdiction for his acts all over the world, and, therefore, if a British subject goes to France or America, and is a party, either directly or indirectly, by word or deed [loud cheers]—if he is accessory in any manner to any of these transactions, he is, when he returns to this country, subject to our jurisdiction, and to the punishment imposed by our law, just as if what he has done had been done in this country." Messrs. Egan, Sheridan & Co. may take note. If they contemplate favoring you with their company permanently it is for you to deal with them. If they return here they will here be held liable for deeds and for words done and uttered in America.

The section which throws upon a possessor of dynamite the burden of proving his innocence may be deemed novel, but it is not novel. It is not the offspring of panic, but already part of the settled law of the country. A man found in the night with a dangerous weapon, or with housebreaking tools, must justify his possession of them. "If," says Sir William, "a man may be called on to show the reason why he has a pick-lock, I think he may be called on to show by what right he has a hundred weight of nitro-glycerine." And most people—assassins excepted—will think so too.

The bill is to be permanent, not temporary, and the Home Secretary protested in terms of much force against the suggestion that it might have been made temporary. It is a bill, he said, which ought to have been passed long ago. To make it a temporary measure might give it the appearance of having been passed in a panic, and weaken its authority. Its severity is not meant to be exceptional. It deals with a wholly new state of things, and nobody can say how long this new state of things may last. "We meet it with new weapons and with the determination to put down the schemes that threaten us and arrest their authors." Society may think itself, I will add, fortunate in having its security confided at such a moment to the hands of a man exceptionally well fitted to protect the innocent and crush the guilty. Sir William Harcourt is a Home Secretary of the first order; with great legal and political knowledge, familiar with business and with the world, judicious, energetic resolute, and of a force of character that carries him through emergencies which a weaker man would have found intolerable. The eulogy he has pronounced on the police others may well say is his own eulogy, for he it is who has infused into a body of men heretofore somewhat sluggish something of his own vigor and power of doing his duty to the utmost.

The one exception to the unanimity of approval and support granted to this bill comes, not from Irish obstructionists—they had the sense and prudence to be silent—but, of all men in the world, from Lord Salisbury. He it is who has always been upbraiding this Government for impotence in preventing and punishing crime, and he it is who assails them with bitter revilings for an act of necessary rigor. He described the bill as obviously brought forward in a panic, as rushed through both Houses of Parliament, as making large inroads upon the criminal law of an objectionable character. His language was of extreme violence and acrimony, and it has the almost unanimous condemnation of his own party in both Houses. Nobody supported him in the Lords, nobody defends him in the press, and the leaders of the Conservative party in the House of Commons repudiated him in advance, and gave a loyal support to the Government. What Lord Salisbury said about panic and objectionable novelty is simply untrue. What he has said and done serves no purpose except to discredit him and to give aid and comfort to the dynamite party. As to haste, Sir William Harcourt stated the reasons for immediate legislation in words which may stand as a sufficient rebuke to Lord Salisbury: "My business is rather to allay than to excite panic; but I should be doing wrong if I concealed from the House my conviction, and if I did not state upon my responsibility what I know, that the danger is very great and very imminent, and that it ought to be dealt with at once, and with a strong hand."

To-day's news is that one reason for urgency is the expected arrival of fresh dynamite agents, believed to be on board steamers from America due this week at Irish and English ports. Certain it is that no day passes which does not bring tidings of new perils. The police believe they can deal with the danger, but they are very far from underestimating the extent of it; nor are they blind to the possibility that conspiracies of which they have no hint may be approaching maturity.

G. W. S.

THE AFTER-DINNER SPEECHES OF AMERICANS.

From The London Telegraph.

It has often been debated whether it is to climate, to race, to the influence of free institutions, or to some other subtle cause that men owe the gift of eloquence, and in a little book called "Daniel Webster and his Contemporaries," it is stated that the prince of American orators was firm in his conviction that as a predisposing cause climate outweighed all the rest. If such be the case, the climate of these islands is evidently less calculated to create good speakers than that of the North American continent, as among us there is not one man fluent of tongue against the ten to whom our kinsfolk in the United States can point. Take, for instance, that rarest and, to Englishmen, most difficult accomplishment of after-dinner oratory, and who that has attended a public dinner in London and another in New-York can doubt upon which side the Atlantic the superiority in this respect lies? About a quarter of a century since Richard Cobden, then at his apogee as one of the most persuasive and practised speakers in the House of Commons, chanced to pay a visit to Chicago, in order to look after an investment he had made in the shares of the Illinois Central Railroad. There a complimentary dinner was given to him, at which some forty guests were included. Among them was a fairly representative sprinkling of the bankers, merchants, lawyers, speculators, and what not of that wonderful young city; and, dinner being over, speaking was freely indulged in, the verdict of all present—Englishmen and Americans—being that the worst speeches of the evening came from Richard Cobden's lips. People were wont, twenty years since, to regard Charles Dickens as an after-dinner speaker almost without a superior in either hemisphere. The last visit of the great novelist to the United States sufficed, however, to dissipate the illusion under which his countrymen were laboring. "Finally, gentlemen," remarked Charles Dickens, at the banquet given to him in New-York on April 18, 1868, "I do believe that, from every honest mind, upon both sides of the Atlantic, there cannot be absent the conviction that it would be better for this globe to be riven by an earthquake, fired by a comet, overrun by an iceberg, and abandoned to the Arctic fox and bear, than that it should present the spectacle of these two great nations, each of which has in its own way done so much for freedom, being ever again arrayed the one against the other."

Compare with the hyperbole of this extravagant, or, to use an Americanism, "hifalutin" elocution, the easy grace and quiet dignity of the speech delivered, with admirable effect, by the American Ambassador, Mr. James Russell Lowell, at the dinner recently given by the Institution of Civil Engineers. There were Englishmen present at that dinner who—again to employ an Americanism—were well calculated "to hold up their end of the plank." The House of Peers was represented by Lord Derby and Lord Kimberley; the House of Commons by Mr. Bright, Sir Richard Cross and Mr. Childers. No one of ordinary culture who chanced to hear or to read the speeches delivered by the English Cabinet Ministers would—to use a phrase of which Robert Southey was very fond—have "had his mind scratched" by any one of them. Mr. Bright, indeed, could not altogether get away from party politics, even upon that confessedly neutral ground. But when Mr. Lowell rose, there was, in the accents, the delivery, the voice, the manner, and still more in the words of the speaker, that which irresistibly engaged the fancy and riveted the attention of the hearers.

LORD CHESTERFIELD.—The famous Lord Chesterfield had a relation, a Mr. Stanhope, who was exceedingly proud of his pedigree, which he pretended to trace to a most ridiculous antiquity. Lord Chesterfield was one day walking through an obscure street in London, when he saw a miserable daub of Adam and Eve in Paradise. He purchased the painting, and having written on the top of it, "Adam de Stanhope, of Eden, and Eve his wife," he sent it to his relation, as a valuable old family portrait of his remote ancestors.

BROADWAY NOTE-BOOK.

MEN AND THINGS, THE COUNTRY ROUND.

THE PERSONAL NOTES AND NOTIONS OF A BROADWAY LOUNGER.

Poor Jack Waller! Yachting on angry billows, so many years to be killed by falling out of a mule wagon! I saw him only yesterday, it seems, on Broadway, and felt his surcharged smile running over his face like a good measure of barley. He was inherently merry, moved to joy by passing occurrences, looking back among the young for his pleasures, a time-finder or pleasure in this city where pleasure is submerged in fierce Mammon, and yet shrewd and holding his own in business, but laughingly. He told me last month that he was tired of sailing, having been at it twenty years, and now it seems that when we are surfeited with our life-long amusement the tragic hour is near. Mrs. Waller was the daughter of James W. Nye, the first Governor and Senator of Nevada, and had his fine appearance, large bovine eyes, creamy skin and good stature. She and Jack Waller had been playmates. He left no children. At his parents' country-house Senator Nye spent his last days alive, and there sighed away the most melodious bugle that ever blew from the stump in this State in the revolt of the Free Soil Barnburners.

Brief is the prize-fighter's day. Sullivan has been going to the Russian baths when in New-York to "wash the rum out of him," as the gossip there said; now he falls, not as the gladiator, from exterior wounds, but bled from within, where the lungs exclaim against his inhumanity to himself. No prize-fighter ever came to anything. Morrissey left nothing and was saturated with disease. Heenan knocked himself out of time in early manhood. Elliott was a thief and convict, and died in his boots while arrogating to himself the empty "championship of America." In the Rebellion prize-fighters proved to have neither endurance nor ordinary preservative sense. Ranken, the bully giant of Philadelphia, was always in disgrace at the head of his company. Bradley, who beat him, never rose above a low sailors groggery. Tom Hyer went around consumptive and superfluous all his closing years. But the tavern and dance-house keepers who are the backers of these prize-fighters and pet them forward from puppydom to brutedom, often live well and have their country-places and bowers and stand in good credit with tradesmen. These are the men who ought to be sent to prison. When Joe Coburn came out of Auburn jail he repentantly said: "Liquor has been my misery. I'll never drink it again: I'll keep a saloon."

Mr. T. R. Crawford has purchased a beautiful estate on the Sound a mile from Stamford, Conn. He was in the Mexican War and was wounded at Monterey. His grandfather, a Judge in Westchester County, was executed by the British in the Revolutionary War. For many years he built ships at Williamsburg, some of which are yet afloat.

Charles Blackie, who died at Tom's River, N. J., during the week, was a typical young politician under the Machine, and possessed all the good traits of those impulsive if forward young men. Generous to a fault, giving his time and labor and money to office-getting for others, doing much good to poor and deserving people, and with a fairly large income, probably leaving nothing, he illustrated the good and the evil side of the city politician's career. His error was not his, but in the system of things; it became necessary, in order to discharge his innumerable obligations, that his State Senator, Congressman, and all whom he nominated, should accept his selection of placemen. In time they refused to do so. His control o the XIIIth District was then maintained at the cost of Republican defeat. He grieved over this but was powerless to chasten himself. He thought his sacrifices and activity entitled him to control and that ungrateful motives animated his creations. He continued to do kind chores for people to the last, discouraged and sick as he was. In very early life he had been a sportingman, a butcher and a sutler. These beginnings, well as he compensated for them, told against him in the management of educated men. He purchased books and tried to catch up to the day: it was too late. He died regretted and almost without enemies. He told me in the midst of the Stalwart rebellion that he never had acted on that side from any love of Conkling but from real affection for Arthur.

It would be interesting society reading, if another intrusion into private life, to see the names of the pupils at New-York City seminaries. I observe here a daughter of Mayor Means, of Cincinnati; a daughter of Alfred Cowles, of Chicago; the daughters of Governor A. R. Shepherd, who have come from far beyond Chihuahua, Mexico, as I happen to walk along Fifth ave. of an afternoon. The educational interest of New-York has become a very strong business feature, also, and some of the older seminary keepers have become rich.

A friend tells me that the hale ex-Governor of Massachusetts, Alexander Rice, who must be sixty-two or sixty-three years old, has become not only a husband but a father again. His former mess-room colleague in Congress, Henry B. Anthony, is for the second time prostrated with something apoplectic. Ben: Perley Poore, Anthony's committee clerk so long, has just gone out of Washington correspondence as Anthony's head fails. The *coup de grace* that Anthony gave Sprague was like the same service that Colonel Newcome rendered to his kinsman at the Parliamentary election: he beat the rascal at the polls but smashed his fortune doing it, and went to the Charter House to await the day he should say "*Adsum.*" It is the last quail on toast that does the business.

Senator Pendleton did not take part in the late election in the city of Cincinnati nor spend any money therein beyond his customary subscription. His friends tell me that he says politics is not worth his attention on the scramble-and-purchase principle.

A few minutes' conversation I had last week with Mr. John R. Duff, of Boston, the last of the great new collapses in Wall Street, revealed a campaign that was a tragedy almost of the proportions of the Gunpowder Plot. Deriving business instincts from his father, who constructed the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad years before the Rebellion,—that father who also saved the Union Pacific Railroad by his personal strength and credit in the collapse of 1873,—the son, educated, mild, refined, quietly resolved to make a great fortune for himself. Behind him were five millions of dollars, the acquisitions of an unusually prosperous family. He did not enter the street without ascertainments and full information, and a sagacity that still illuminates with its reminiscences the gulf he has passed over. One thing he left behind him, as Christian left his roll in the Pilgrim's Progress: suspicion. His dealings were so large that, unknown as he was, the masters of the street thought they detected each other in the dark. Ten to thirty thousand shares a day he fed to or took from the market. His broker, a stranger previously to him, acquired a potential name in the Exchange for the magnitude of his trades. Yet Napoleon's strategy is in vain if Ney is selling him on every battlefield. The splendid fortune disappeared like the Second Empire at Sedan; another operator with Mr. Duff, Mr. Chapin, committed suicide; the broker restored three-quarters of a million but has three millions in his establishment and family yet, and now begins the suit at law for full restitution. As the house went up so it shall come down.

Mr. William Turnbull, well informed on the subject, remarked to me last week: "The country-seats and castles of the English gentry and nobility are nearly all destitute of modern plumbing and sewerage conveniences, and Americans would not occupy premises thus exposed to odors and fevers." Said I: "Why do their rivers give out no malaria like ours?" "Because the country has been tilled so many centuries that the rivers and soil have worked out of their systems the obstacles and deposits still taking place here under only partial cultivation." "Why have they no mosquitoes?" "Because they have no hot weather."

People from about Rochester fear the Vanderbilt family will acquire the West Shore and Buffalo road. They are nervous about seeing Central locomotives and construction cars on the new line, and tell wild tales of Lake Shore agents settling real-estate condemnations on the new line and Central checks paying West Shore dues. From other sources come rumors that Mr. Vanderbilt now owns nearly all the stock of the Lake Shore, and that the two sleeping-car companies are to combine very soon and make the "greatest show on earth" grand entrance to New-York in June. The Central is so crowded with business that freight is running on the passenger tracks.

Mr. Charles Sterling is president of the National Storage Company, which has just completed a double-track steel railroad on stone piers two miles long, at a cost of one million dollars, from the grades of the Pennsylvania's Bergen cut at Jersey City to the company's two miles of water front on and about Black Tom Island and three warehouses similar to those of the Atlantic Docks, Brooklyn, are to be erected and storage upon an international scale commenced. This shows that pier leases and water fronts on Manhattan Island have become so valuable that the whole of the Upper Bay is coming into dock purposes.

Meallo, talking to me about hats yesterday, said that an English hat manufacturer came out here last year and paid the foreman of one of our leading hat factories $3,000 to go to England and stay ashore one month, teaching our system of making hats on that side. The British manufacturer had previously sent several of his foremen to this country and some of his most expert workmen to pick up the art, but they were too dull, like all mere subjects, to grasp it. American hatters regard their wares as the best in quality and lightness in the world. On account of the Anglomania prevailing here, however, a considerable importation of English hats comes to this market chiefly, and are put out on Fifth-ave. and Broadway in conjunction with the "dude" coat and the sharp-pointed shoe. Banco-steerers avoid gentlemen in that dress as possibly "quicker on the borrow" than themselves.

I hear that the Hon. Randolph Tucker, of Virginia, is exceedingly ill with the gout in this city, and some of his friends think he may not live.

I saw ex-Senator Wallace, of Pennsylvania, here yesterday, fresh and light as a bride. He says the Vanderbilt railroad system called the South Penn (sylvania) has nearly the united support of the Pittsburg merchants and manufacturers and will go through, and that the Vanderbilt railroad from the West Branch of the Susquehanna to the Allegheny River, in which Mr. Wallace is interested, may also become a through line. Mr. Wallace says Randall will be a hard man to beat for Speaker, having such organization around him.

Moving day is on Tuesday and is a good test of human nature. Then the man with the furniture wagon carries his heavy load in life with a philosophic smile. The affectionate husband has a sudden business engagement in Boston. The able-bodied wife obtains another chance to make the remark: "I don't know what would become of this house but for me."

Everybody remembers the two main hotels of Union officers in the war—Maltby's, on the Basin, in Baltimore, and Willard's in Washington. Maltby is now keeping the new Lafayette Hotel in Philadelphia, which has cost $750,000 and is owned by Moro Phillips, a manufacturer of fertilizers. Sykes, of Willard's, is dead; his partner Chadwick is clerk at the Hoffman House, and the third partner, Presbury, has just sold out his interest in the West End Hotel to Mr. Hildreth. Con Jones has lived at the Elberon Hotel nearly all winter. Colonel Jewell, who commanded a regiment in the war, has just resigned the St. George Hotel, Philadelphia, to Ward Brothers. Mr. Bochius Lester, of Saratoga, a nephew of the late J. G. Cooke, is keeping Willard's. Pierre Lorillard is said to be William Connor's security, and John McCullough has a side interest.

Mr. Thomas Donelson, of Philadelphia, has bought nearly the whole interior of the room where Jefferson's committee evolved the Declaration of Independence, and he will build a library of it at his residence in West Philadelphia. He is one of the leading collectors of historical bric-a-brac in this country, and frequently comes to New-York as an attorney and authority on the land laws, which he digested for Congress. He told me that General Garfield was much concerned about the printing of conversations and conclusions reached at Mentor during the Presidential campaign until it was finally discovered that reporters of the newspapers had hired themselves out at the livery stables in the adjoining town and were driving his visitors to and fro.

Mr. Frank McLaughlin, of Philadelphia, told me on Thursday that Francis Drexel, of the banking house which originated there, was said to be worth thirteen million dollars, and Anthony Drexel worth eleven millions. There were about 100 millionnaires in Philadelphia, and some fortunes of five to ten millions. Jay Cooke was probably worth three millions again. A Mr. Williams, of whom little was known, was one of the wealthiest Philadelphians. The son of Thomas A. Scott, age about thirty, was building the finest residence in Philadelphia, on Walnut-st. Mr. George Roberts, president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, was put down at six millions, and Mr. Cassatt at two or three. Mr. Roberts's salary is $25,000 a year. Mr. Thomas, once of Jay Cooke's banking house, was now a partner in Drexel's. Colonel McClure had $34,000 income from his paper, his wife owning 555 out of the 2,000 shares, and his salary was $12,000, included in the above. Eight millions had been spent on the new public buildings at Broad and Market. The State would probably be recovered by the Republicans at the next election.

The renomination of Seth Low to be Mayor of Brooklyn would not seem to any respectable observer to be in question, yet there are machine men there disappointed and mildly fierce. He will, however, prevail, though not of his own seeking. His father is believed to be very proud of him, but does not interfere in the least degree with his administration. He is rich, being a partner in his father's house. Mr. Chapin, the Speaker of the Assembly at Albany, is spoken of as the candidate of the Democrats to oppose Mr. Low.

I asked the Hon. Alexander R. Boteler during the week how the picture duty was advanced by his committee from 10 to 30 per cent. Said he: "Thomas Donelson there came before our committee and made a speech on that question, showing how cheap foreign paintings were imported here by the thousand and sold at auction, and how so many American painters abroad were mere picture-sellers for their French tutors, that we were carried away. Donelson is a buyer of paintings chiefly American. I take a similar interest in American art; my great-grandfather was Charles Wilson Peale; to paint has been my passion as an amateur since childhood. I want to see our themes treated on the spot. As a Whig of the Webster school, I believe in protection not only to American industry but to American art. The Belgian Consul came before us and said we had no art, no schools of painting, nothing for art to exist upon. So I guess we may as well begin, especially since I hear that there are 3,500 persons living by painting pictures in this country."

Titian Peale, surviving brother of Rembrandt Peale and son of Charles Wilson Peale, a scientific man, is still living in Philadelphia, at the age of eighty-five, in excellent health. He was one of Long's party to the Rocky Mountains, and it is said gave the name to Long's Peak. He is to go to Denver to the exhibition this summer.

I spent a few hours in the Irish Convention at Philadelphia last Friday. A bare, cold, fireless hall, filled up with red settees, and its galleries draped in American flags festooned with green laurel, and the stage overhung with loops of green, spangled with yellow immortelles, and two pictures of Parnell and Egan, besides his plaster statuette on a pedestal, and a plaster bust of Washington and a few green harped flags here and there completed the impression of poor exiles of Erin indeed. The character of the delegates was respectable, yet not so superior that a clean, well-shaven, clear-skinned man was not noticeable. Whiskey as an article of diet, not to say delight, had left its bronzed corn-mark on many, hardening the type. The best-looking class were the priests; they are the statesmen of the race, yet span only from Erin to Rome. A race making but taking no impression, only less resolute and obstinate than their British foemen, quick of apprehension, sinuous, yet determined on the end, they increase as an anomaly the more disproportionate their number. The presiding officer and the priestly leaders looked less like Irishmen than any others. A fair number of American-born men were sprinkled among the delegates. They were nearly all well-dressed, and I have seen many a political convention of either party, even in New-York and Massachusetts, making no better impression.

I took my first look at O'Donovan Rossa. This gentleman was of marked appearance, better dressed than most of the convention, a well-kneaded, broad but not heavy, elastic-treading man, of a pale "white-livered" skin, and a rather worried nervous temperament, and apparently neglected by the gathering. He was not much observed when he came in and not at all applauded. He wore a nearly white spring overcoat and black cloth suit. He was attended by a large, dark, giant-looking man. Mr. Rossa, whose real name is said to be O'Donovan, had not one of the candid, cheery, self-easy faces of nearly all the regular delegates. Conspiracy has left its wrinkles and twitches. His brown hair is brushed back from his temples; his eyes seem to be hollow and in pain; the Irish expression came and then went at various times. His hair is thinning yet but little gray. Reddish brown moustache and goatee inclose a not very shapely mouth. I am told that this man was chained for years to a pillar in Dartmoor Prison and made to kneel forward on his knees and eat with his mouth out of a dish poked under the door by the jailer. The world is governed by personal feelings. Mr. Rossa resembles in figure and face Colonel William R. Roberts, late Fenian merchant and Congressman.

Mrs. Parnell came into the convention when it was very full, and every being in it rose, with some applause but more respect, to let her pass through a dense aisle of men. Two younger ladies accompanied her. She was dressed in black and had a white crape tie or collar that gave her something of a nun's look. A warm, impulsive, perhaps self-satisfied expression, a shortish, buxom figure, and something of Mrs. General Sherman's appearance, but not so practical and open in countenance, she might have been an Irish abbess over some of the American converts.

The priests looked to me, till they opened their mouths, like a set of shrewd and hard-working Methodist itinerant preachers.

"A WINTER TALE."

AT THE FIRESIDE OF A SOUTHERN INN.

WINTRY WEATHER AMONG NORTH CAROLINA HILLS—PICTURES OF NATIVE LIFE AND CHARACTER.

[FROM AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]

ASHEVILLE, N. C., April 18.—One does not go into the mountains of Western North Carolina in midwinter for pleasure. Weak-lunged persons find it beneficial to be there at all seasons, since the air, however intemperate, is balsamic and curative. Others go on business, under protest, and to this class I belonged recently.

At the close of a snowy day in February I found myself in a big, old-fashioned farmhouse of a hotel on the banks of the French Broad. The office was a huge, bare room, running through from side to side of the house, and faintly warmed at one wall by a vast fireplace, whose powerful shaft drew nine-tenths of the heat up the chimney, instead of permitting it to escape into the room which needed it badly enough. An old gentleman sat on the hearth and made room for me.

"This must be a pretty old house," I remarked, as I drew up a splint-bottomed chair.

"Yes," he answered; "built fifty years ago."

Stooping down he lifted an oak brand and held its red coal to the bowl of his pipe, while he surveyed me over his spectacles.

"Before the pike was put through the State in 1829, there was only an Injun trail along the river. The Cherokees lived over all this region then, and called the river Takeeostah."

Then he went on to give me an interesting lot of reminiscences of these wild and lofty mountains, which hold some of the loveliest scenery in the United States, and where an uncouth but honest and industrious people have been living, almost unchanged, for a century. He told me also of famous men whom now and then these hills have sent out into the big world. Presently young men began to drop in, until there was a full semi-circle of neighbors, chatting, laughing, smoking and spitting furiously at the fire, which sputtered back from the green logs of oak that must dry half an hour in the blaze before the heat will singe their slivers.

Some of these men are natives and full of "local color," as an artist would say. At the extreme of the half-circle sits a half-blood Indian, tall, swarthy and brigandish, with his trousers in his boots and a capacious pouch of 'coon-skin slung over his shoulder, the tail outside for ornament. He has been out hunting, but "got to see nothin' worth shootin' at." His gun stands in the corner, an ancient rifle almost as tall as himself. He tells me that in some parts of the mountains bears and catamounts are common enough; one man, only a few miles from where we sit, killed three of the former last winter. Wolves, too, are greatly dreaded by the mountain shepherds, whose flocks often fall a prey to this traditional enemy. This talk starts a story from another guest.

"My brother was tellin' me that last night hees dawgs got to chasin' a fawx, and run the fawx till they keeled it. Then a cu-ur-dawg came up and thought he'd taake the fawx away from the other dawgs, and so he lipt in. The dawgs all lipt on to-op of the cu-ur, and nigh about chewed heem up. My bro-other heered the racket and lipt up and raan about haalf a mile and got there just to see so-omethin' white a-lippin' up and streakin' it off. The dawgs chased the cu-ur home, and ran heem into the porch and lipt on heem aga-ain. It sacaart the people in the house, and one of the boys caam out and caught one of the hounds and slashed his tail off and one of his ears with a knife."

"Doggawn it!" cries the man of the long rifle when he heard this, "I'd felt like I wanted to shoot that feller ef it had been *my* dawg."

"He must 'a' been a sinalinktum kind o' cuss anyhow," was another's comment.

No names had been mentioned, but several present seemed to know who had been complimented by these observations. Naturally, therefore, they fell at gossipping about them.

"There ain't skasely one of 'em but what drinks to excess. Hit's a sort o' family trait," was the tenor of one expression. "I was up there the other day, and Joe was just crazy. He could ha'dly stan' straight—was nea'ly parallel." I judged the speaker meant to say paralyzed. Old "Uncle John," groaning with cold, came hobbling in just then, each tread of his leviathan feet shaking the house beyond any power of the gale. He brought an armful of snowy oak wood, just split out of the log. If any dry wood had been laid by in the autumn it had been used up long ago. He was about to enliven the dull fire by putting a lot of fine splints on top of the smoking logs—true negro fashion—when one of the young men interfered and went at the work of reviving the blaze, while the rest attacked him and his method with comment and advice. Somebody remarked that pretty soon he would open a return volley if not let alone.

"Is he pretty well at that?" I asked.

"Cuss!" answered my next neighbor proudly; "Lord, he can cuss by note!"

This original compliment seemed to please the object of the praise, whose flushed face relaxed into a smile of modest self-appreciation, while he struggled with the refractory sticks, most of which were by nature too crooked to lie still.

"I reckin dey was cut at the wrong time o' de moon," announced "Uncle John" in an oracular tone. "Dere's a heap in that. Ef yo' cut youre fyahwood in de light" (*i. e.* the full) "o' de moon, hit's gwine to burn widout no trouble nohow; but ef yo' cuts hit in de da'k o' de moon, hit nigh about won't burn at all."

"Why is that, Uncle?"

"Dunno, sir; but hit's so, sure. I knows dat. Juss so wi' fence-rails. Now yo' lay a fence-rail in de da'k o' de moon, an' hit's gwine to sink deep in de groun' an' make yo' fence all wobbly like; but yo' put down de bottom rail in de light o' de moon, an' she won't settle any skasely, an' 'll stan' firm de yeah 'roun'. Dunno why, but hit's so, shuah!"

A new-comer entered and made his way to the fire, blue and shivering though well wrapped up, especially with an excellent garment rarely or never seen at the North—riding leggings of blanket-stuff buttoning to the top of the thigh.

"Did you go down the river this morning?" was asked.

"Not by a derned sight," he replied. "Hit was so doggone cold I wouldn't a' rid down tha this mornin' for nothin' I ever seed a' most."

"I saw old Judge Blank in Asheville yesterday," is the next chance remark I hear. "He's looking mighty chipper since he got his new wife, but she makes his hair curl now and then, I reckon."

"Isn't he the man," I ask, "of whom so many good court stories are told?"

"I reckon so; but North Carolina is full of good old gray-headed court stories. I did hear one t'other day, though, that was new to me—mebbe you fellows have heard it. A juryman over by Morganton had passed the challenge and was told to 'look upon the prisoner,'—you know the regular rigmarole. Staring hard at him a minute, the fellow sung out, 'Yes, Judge, I think he's guilty.'"

"The judge used to ride his circuit on a favorite mule," said my aged friend, consulting his memory of ante-bellum and ante-railway days. "One day he was pleading for a chicken thief in an out-of-the-way town, when suddenly the prisoner lit out of the court-room, leaped on the mule's back at the door, and galloped off over the hills. Shading his eyes with his hand the judge ejaculated: 'The liberty-loving son of a gun.' Then turning to the laughing crowd he added: 'But he's a good fellow and he'll send the mule back'; which he did, turning it loose as soon as he reached the mountains. This same mule was very fast, and the judge used to race him proudly. One bright night the boys stole him out of the judge's pasture and ran him on the track until they supposed they had ascertained his gait to a dot. Then they arranged a race with their horses, and offered big odds against the mule. All these offers the judge took eagerly and called for more, much against the remonstrances of his friends, who hinted to him of the fraud. But the judge was unmoved, staked all his cash, and the race came off. 'Betsy' won clear ahead. 'I know'd the old mule wouldn't throw off on me,' shouted her owner as he pocketed everybody's stakes."

"I know how dat happen," said Uncle John, who had been a grinning listener. "Dar's no use bettin' on what a mule 'll do in de night. A hoss 'll run like de dibble by moonlight, but a mule done 'fraid to try like he would in de day time."

Retiring from this circle I sought my chilly room and slipped into bed. How iron-like and icy were those sheets! How the window rattled! How marble-like was the moonlight on the bare floor! How hard were the knots in the rope underneath the thin feather-stuffed mattress! There was no getting warm, and I arose, redonned underclothing, heaped my overcoat and everything else above me, and at last managed to get to sleep, without my teeth chattering. The boast of these mountains is their coolness, and I am inclined to think it well founded. My slumbers were broken by the opening of my door, and the housequaking tramp of tall "Uncle John."

"Is yo' gwine on de train?" he asked, shading the lamp with his hand so that I can see past it to his well-muffled black face. "'F yo' is, you'd better be right smart in gettin' out, fer I spees she'l be up right off now. Couldn't leave no water here las' night 'thout hit's frozin', but I'll bring yo' some d'reckly." And he departed with the little white pitcher.

It was as dark as the inside of an infidel, and I lay still till I felt the tumblings and heard the thunderous tread of his returning footsteps.

"Hit's snowin' and blowin' dead ahead," were his first words. But there was no help for it. The whistle of the train was already heard, and I had only time to snatch a breakfast of over fried steak and under-done soda biscuits with the few passengers when I was hurried out into the blustering gray of the winter dawn and whirled northward through the heavy mists.

This is the "wrong side" of a noted and justly favorite summer resort. I do not recommend to others a similar reversal of seasons; yet my adventure was not without its entertainment and reward, not only in the fireside "character" exhibited, but in the novel and marvellous beauty of the winter weather among these splendid heights and gorges.

Thackeray was not a humorist in the sense that Dickens was, nor a wit in the sense that Jerrold was, but he now and then said a good thing in a quiet way. He was pestered on one occasion, while in America, by a young gentleman of an inquiring turn of mind as to what was thought of this person and that person in England. "Mr. Thackeray," he asked, "what do they think of Tupper?" "They don't think of Tupper," was the reply.